ASPECTS OF SHI'I THOUGHT FROM THE SOUTH OF LEBANON: AL-'IRFAN, MUHAMMAD JAWAD MUGHNIYYA, MUHAMMAD MAHDI SHAMSEDDIN, MUHAMMAD HUSAIN FADLALLAH

By Chibli Mallat

PAPERS ON LEBANON
Number 7

I- Perspectives on South Lebanon

The "South" of Lebanon has been known for centuries as Jabal 'Amil. Under an often quoted geographical definition, it extends over an area 80 kilometre long and 40 kilometre wide between the Mediterranean and the Bekaa valley. Its boundaries "start at the mouth of the Awwali river north of Sidon, which is part of it", and extend "to the south of the village of Bassa, including the villages of Khalisa, in the Hula district, Hunin, Quds, Yusha', Sulha, and Tarbin, which are villages given to Palestine" [1]. Under this delimitation, Jabal 'Amil covers some 3,200 square kilometre, and includes major Southern cities like Jezzin and Sidon. But in less extensive definitions of Jabal 'Amil, these cities are generally not included under it, and form distinct geographical entities, which are nonetheless deemed part of the Lebanese "South".

As in many parts of the Middle East, Jabal 'Amil witnessed in the twentieth century a demographic explosion which brought its population from an estimate of some 130,000 in the twenties to some 5 to 600,000 inhabitants before the great exodus caused by the Lebanese Civil War.[2]. But a severe drain had preceded the flight caused by the war, and many impoverished inhabitants from the South had emigrated to the suburbs of Beirut to seek jobs in the economy of services and in the emerging industries of the Lebanese capital. The South of Lebanon, dominated by a tight social structure under the control of a few landed families such as tha As'ads, the Zeins, and the 'Oseyrans, the Zu'ama, and by an agriculture increasingly dependent on the monoculture of tobacco, was by 1975 boiling with unrest. Fuelled by the contact in Beirut with revolutionary ideas from all over the Arab world, the grudge of the 'Amilis against the relative neglect of the Lebanese central State towards their plight was compounded by the political marginality of the Shi'i community, which constitutes the largest religious sect in the country, and the overwhelming majority in the South. With its explosive regional position to the North of Palestine, Jabal 'Amil was destined to live a tumultuous age.

In the early nineteenth century already, the area represented a sensitive terrain where armies of contending empires clashed. A bit further south of the present border, the governor of 'Akka often acted as a key player in a strategic coastline that represented the foremost advance of the early French Middle Eastern expansionist drive: in June 1799, Napoleon was stopped before the walls of the city, where he was barred the route to Syria. A few decades later, the adventurous ruler of Egypt, Muhammad 'Ali, whose son Ibrahim Pacha was temporarily successful in his Lebanese projections, was soon drawn into the quagmire of shifting alliances. Jabal 'Amil did not remain long under its sway. As the Egyptian armies

retreated to leave the Lebanese mountains north of Sidon in the throes of a twenty-year civil war, Jabal ‘Amil went back to the taxes of the Ottoman empire appointees. This was not destined to continue for a long time. The war alliance with the Central Powers chosen by Constantinople secured for French and British ambitions the division of the area according to the 1916 Sykes-Picot plan.

The South of Lebanon, the Governorship of ‘Akka, Jabal ‘Amil, were not the only appellations bestowed by history on the area. Another geographical signifier will also shed some light on troubles to come, the Galilee. Although this reality tends to be forgotten, the line drawn by the colonizers a few miles north of Haifa was as arbitrary as most other boundaries of the Middle East, and in 1920, relatives found themselves suddenly separated by a State boundary that meant different citizenships, allegiances, and fates. The result was that historic Galilee was divided.3 .

A few years into the century, the resentment towards this division of a historically compact area was bound to bode ill for a peaceful course. This division was aggravated by the geo-economic consequences wrought by the whims of the European powers: the whole area was economically marginalized. From a zone destined to be no less flourishing than the neighbouring harbours south and north, Haifa and Beirut, the South of Lebanon had overnight turned into a periphery. The impoverishment that ensued would in due course carry legitimate resentments. Aggravated by an international situation that placed it at the heart of the regional conflict, Jabal ‘Amil turned into the weakest link of a fledgling chain.

But that was only part of the story, and the better known one, for the regional politics of South Lebanon have received their due share of worries for history-makers and scholars of the political scene in the Middle East. Adventurous hotheads, from Muhammad ‘Ali to Ariel Sharon, have had little luck with the narrow and lush coastal stretch, and they brought grist to the mill of a plethora of analysts and observers. The literature in the past few years has been particularly abundant on the South of Lebanon and its until then forgotten inhabitants. It is difficult, without more hindsight, and in the present state of fluctuating events, to add more to some of the very thorough existing studies.4 . What, however has been relatively neglected, is the wealth of the area in its production of exceptional Middle East thinkers. To this gap in the study of the Lebanese South this paper is devoted.5 But in view of the variety in the thought produced in Jabal ‘Amil, emphasis will rest on three characters whose prominence has come to the fore recently: Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya, Muhammad Mahdi Shamseddin, and Muhammad Husain Fadlallah.

These were not accidental individuals. The intellectual production of the Lebanese South has deep roots, and it antedates by centuries the current political turmoil. Already in 1929, Sleiman Daher thought it useful to describe "the connections of scholarship between Damascus and Jabal ‘Amil", and found seven reasons to study the link of the Syrian capital with ‘Amili scholars:

First: because it is a page of the history of a region forgotten by many people. Second: to show that the ‘Amili area, despite its narrowness and the scarcity of its population, had in the world of knowledge a noteworthy place that no other country of similar proportions in terms of area and population had. Third: to show that this area was known by reputation, especially in the last centuries, for a standard of scholarship that made people come to it from afar. Four: to show the scientific contacts between a group of its scholars and scholars from Damascus, and the place of some of its literary men in Damascene and other circles. Five: to

show that Damascus was one of the places of study to which the ‘Amilis went. Six: to show that the well-known Shi’ism of Jabal ‘Amil did not affect the example of scientific tolerance of the ‘Amilis when they went to Damascus. Seven: for what this study offers as example for times gone in terms of the scholarship achieved by the forefathers, in the hope that the sons will follow suit and renew these relations.6

Many of the reasons that prompted the interest of Sleiman Daher remain relevant. But the intellectual contacts of Jabal ‘Amil were not limited to Damascus, even though the Syrian dimension is a sine qua non to the understanding of some of the alliances in the present Lebanese War.7. The intellectual depth of Jabal ‘Amil extended much further east, to the cradle of Shi’ism in Southern Iraq, and to Persia. In 10 centuries of Shi’ism in Jabal ‘Amil, the flow of thinking from Najaf and Karbala has been continuous, and the opposite was also true. When the Safavids established Shi’ism as the official religion of the Persian empire in the 16th Century, they turned to the scholars of Jabal ‘Amil for support: "If Shi’ism was to be the religion of the empire, preached in the mosques, taught in the schools and administered in the courts, there was a need for teachers to propagate it and jurists to define and apply the law". ‘Ulama (Religious scholars) from Jabal ‘Amil were called on "to reinforce those of Persia"8.

The history of the early Shi’i settlement in the Lebanese areas is unknown in its details, but Henri Lammens has written an interesting article on the subject, that traces it back to the times of the Umayyads.9. The truth about the original settlement (or conversion) of the Shi’i community will probably remain shrouded in uncertainty, but for the purpose of this paper, the intellectual dimension -and ensuing aspects of the political developments- must be approached with the variety of layers that have contributed to the formation of the Jabal ‘Amil community: Lebanese, Damascene, Iraqi-Najafi, and Persian.

But even if the international background of the Jabal ‘Amil intellectual and social scene is given detailed consideration, the analysis in the case of Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya, Muhammad Mahdi Shamseddin, and Muhammad Husain Fadlallah can only be partial. Their literary production, which for Fadlallah and Shamseddin, continues profusely, is enormous.10. The list of books written by Mughniyya when he died in 1979 ran to 61 titles, some of which in multiple volumes, and Fadlallah and Shamseddin are following the Mughniyya course closely. The assessment of their production in this paper will be limited to features that appear most prominently against the vicissitudes of the history of South Lebanon, both as a periphery to the Lebanese central State, and as a pivotal battleground of regional confrontations.

Three themes which are prominent in their writings as well as in the general shaping of the attitudes developed by the challenges of the modern age will be discussed. Internally, the economic backwardness and marginalization of the Lebanese South has given way to the shaping of a socio-economic discourse of change and justice, which, though not limited to them in Lebanon, was, at least in the beginning, particularly acute in their case. Regionally, the sensitive geographical position of Jabal ‘Amil to the north of Palestine had violent repercussions on the inhabitants of the area. The South of Lebanon was invaded twice by Israel, and parts of it remain under Israeli control. The attitude to Israel, as well as to the Palestinian armed presence, figures prominently in the concerns and discourse of the three religious thinkers. But perhaps the most interesting aspects of their works came in their efforts towards accommodating their vision of the Lebanese State against a background of institutional marginality, and the ascendancy of the Islamic discourse in the wake of the

establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Obviously, the figure of Ruhullah al-Khumaini looms large over this debate. But the connections between the Shi'i 'ulama of Iran and Lebanon had started years earlier, in the alleys of Najaf and Karbala in the South of Iraq.

This Najaf connection is particularly important for the understanding of the debate of ideas in the contemporary Middle East, and it was echoed in Lebanon before the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran. So, before addressing the socio-economic discourse, the attitude towards Israel, and the institutional issues discussed by the three Lebanese scholars, it is important to see how the intellectual multilayered connection can be seen in operation, much earlier than the present times of trouble, in the journal Al-'Irfan, published in Sidon uninterruptedly since 1909.

II- Al-'Irfan in the Eye of the Cyclone: the Najaf Connection

Al-'Irfan, like the Confárences du Cánacle (1) and Suhail Idris' al-Aadab (2) a few decades later, epitomizes an era, and an area.3. It was founded by Ahmad 'Aref az-Zein in the wake of the 1908 Ottoman Constitution, and profited from the new atmosphere of freedom of expression started in Istanbul. The circles who have contributed to the journal, the debates that were voiced in it, have reflected, and to an extent shaped, history to come. A cursory glance at the contributions in the 1910's and 20's reveals the echoing of the troubles in modern Iraq through the revolution of 1920, as well as, early on, the concerns of the South with the Zionist implantation in Palestine.4. Al-'Irfan, protected by the Lebanese freedom of the press, became the point of convergence of Arabic speaking Shi'i writers throughout the century. It is in al_'Irfan that Muhammad Husain Na'ini (1860-1936), the foremost theoretician of the Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1906, had his seminal work, Tanbih al-Umma wa Tanzih al-Milla translated in Arabic. 5. And the publishers of al-'Irfan closely monitored all the movements in Iraq under the Monarchy, in the journal as well as in the support given to 'Abd ar-Razzaq al-Hasani's encyclopaedic chronicles of the history of modern Iraq. 6.

More significantly for contemporary times, al-'Irfan became also the scholarly voice of the emerging Shi'i revolutionary movement which radiated from Iraq in the aftermath of the 1958 Revolution. In Iraq proper, the channeling of Shi'i dissent in the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala (7) was constrained by several elements, particularly the self-censorship practised to avoid a direct confrontation with the successive military governments from 'Abd al-Karim Qasem (1958-1963) to the two 'Arefs (1966-1968), and the balance sought inside the hauza 'ilmiyya (Circle of scholars) between the advocates of militancy and the more quietist 'Ulama, who from 1963 to 1969 had momentarily gained the upper hand. When in 1969, the antagonism between the Ba'th now in power and the Shi'i 'Ulama was renewed on a much fiercer mode, particularly when the son of the great marja' Muhsin al-Hakim, Mahdi, was sought by the Ba'th as "CIA agent", and had to flee the country, any voicing of dissent became intolerable for the central government, and Al-'Irfan offered a respected alternative platform for the airing of grievances. Two instances indicate how the Iraqi scene was echoed in Lebanon through the Sidon journal.

Little is known about the years of Ruhullah al-Khumaini in Najaf, where he spent 14 years. What is certain is that he kept a low profile in terms of Iraqi domestic politics, and this is not surprising in view of the threat of expulsion that was hovering over him in case he wanted to intervene on the Iraqi scene. In Najaf, Khumaini was under the protection of Muhsin al-Hakim, and participated as a scholar in the intellectual Renaissance of the city. His Islamic

Government scheme, and the theory of ‘the governance of the religious jurist’ (wilayat al-faqih) developed in it, are the result of a series of lectures held at Najaf in 1969-70. This work has become the central institutional reference in the Shi’i political world since its implementation in the Iranian Constitution of 1979 [8], and as such, deserves to be discussed in more detail in relation to its reception in Lebanon.[9]

If the intellectual production of Khumaini can be read in al-Hukuma al-Islamiyya, it is more difficult to have details on his organizational activities in Najaf. The network he wove in the decade that preceded his coming to power remains undocumented, except for some indications that the post-revolutionary development in Iran reveals. This network was in essence constituted by a close circle constituted by his sons Mustafa and Ahmad, and a spate of regular visitors of the holy Shi’i shrines, the ‘Atabat, among whom figure most of the key characters of post-revolutionary Iran.[10]

But the strength of Khumaini’s network has generally come as a retrospect, and his activities in Najaf remain a matter of speculation, an iceberg of which the episode of the exhortatory tapes during the Revolution, however intriguing ([11]), represents only a tip. Although Khumaini’s importance in the Shi’i world was well established already in the mid-sixties, official censorship in Iran, self-restraint and low profile in Iraq, meant that this prominence was an oral phenomenon. The Najaf period remained, in Iraq and in Iran, unwritten: [12] it was left to al-’Irfan to give indications of the religious leader’s importance. The name of Khumaini appears in its pages occasionally, and in 1966, when the editor of the journal, Nizar az-Zein, paid his regular visit to Najaf, he recounted his meeting with several leading scholars in the city, among whom "Ayat Allah al-Khumaini, with whom I stayed about an hour and a half, in which he reiterated his complaints about Iran and the necessity of holding it accountable for what was happening there; so my companions told him that al-’Irfan was the only journal which was writing the truth about Iran and defending him [Khumaini] all the time".[13]

Another episode echoed in the ‘Irfan shows how the intricacies of Southern Iraqi politics surfaced in Lebanon. In 1969, after the charging of Mahdi al-Hakim and his exile, the tension between the ‘Ulama of Najaf and the Ba’th reached a new height, and the religious leadership in Najaf severed all contacts with the central government. It is at this moment that the Ba’th enlisted ‘Ali Kashif al-Ghata to offer a religious alternative, and sent him to Lebanon on an official visit, as the representant of the Najaf ‘Ulama. Al-’Irfan was infuriated. In an editorial in October 1969, Zein attacked ‘Ali, deemed to "speak only for himself", and regretted that a member of such a remarkable family as the Kashif al-Ghata [14] could come as low as pretending to represent the Iraqi Shi’is at a time when the Great Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim was "on strike"[15].

Soon afterwards, in June 1970, Muhsin al-Hakim died, and the mourning processions turned into an act of defiance against the central government, with calls to repeal the ban on Mahdi: As-Sayyid Mahdi Mu Jasus Isma’ ya Rayyis (‘Sayyed Mahdi is no spy, Listen o leader’ [i.e. Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, the Iraqi president]).[16] Zein echoed the messages of sympathy that came to Najaf from the followers of Hakim throughout the Shi’i world, and in Jabal ‘Amil, a weekly -sometimes daily- newspaper also published by the Zeins, a long obituary was published in honour of Hakim. [17].

But al-'Irfan was not only the echo of the Shi'i world of Iraq and Iran. Its main concern, from the outset, was the Lebanon, and it opened its doors to a flurry of writers from various goups and tendencies. Many Christians wrote in al-'Irfan, such as George Kassab, 'Abdallah al-Hushaimi, George Saidah, Michel Sleiman, and the Orthodox bishop George Khodr, as well as Sunnis and Druzes.18 And if the literary branch of the Zain family has offered Middle Eastern thought an eighty-year old journal , it remains to be said that the 'Irfan literary contribution was only one part of a much larger intellectual history of Jabal 'Amil. A more comprehensive account would need to draw many more characters into the picture. Other exceptional Shi'is include, to name only two recent victims of intolerance in Beirut, one of the most encyclopedic philosophers of the century, Husain Mruwwe19, and an innovative analyst formed at the school of the French philosopher Louis Althusser, Hasan Hamdane, a.k.a. Mahdi 'Amel 20, as well as scores of other writers, not to mention the poets. And the non-Shi³i population also supplied its share of noteworthy intellectuals....

In addressing next the case of Mughniyya, Fadlallah and Shamseddine, this paper is thus only a minor part of the Southern Lebanese literary saga. Al-'Irfan (which in any case was, and remains, a place of predilection for their writings) carried prominently the news of the Shi'i community of Lebanon with an eye on the multitude of intellectual and historical connections, from Damascus to India.

III- Thought at the periphery: Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya

Mughniyya was born in 1904, a few years after Ruhullah al-Khumaini, and belongs to a generation that lived through harsh opportunities, both in terms of strains in career opportunities and of intellectual pressure by a surrounding often antagonistic to the old-style clerics. To pursue a legal career for a poor Shi'i formed in theology in Najaf, the best that could be hoped for was a position in the religious courts of the Ja'fari community, which only dealt, under the close supervision of powerful Southern families like the As'ads, the 'Usayrans, and the Zeins, with matters of personal status. In 1948, Mughniyya was appointed judge in the Shari'a court in Beirut, and became president of the tribunal in 1949. But even the highest Shi'i judge wielded little influence in the newly independent Lebanese State, and Mughniyya profoundly resented the fact that, despite his official rank as the highest judicial authority in the community, he had to sit at the bottom of the table at a time when the Sunni Mufti and the Maronite president were presiding over it.1

But even in his relatively secure civil servant position, Mughniyya was not spared the harsh clientelist logic of the Lebanese system. In 1956, after long-winded intrigues, his judicial life was brought to an end 2. He will spend the rest of his existence at the periphery. But if this subdued role was due to the sectarian chokepoints of the Lebanese system, Mughniyya had also to suffer from the intricacies of the Shi'i clerical structure, particularly from the coming onto the Lebanese scene of a player from the outside, Musa as-Sadr.

In 1958, two years after he lost his job at the court, Mughniyya's mentor, 'Abd al-Husain Sharaf ad-Din , who was recognized as the highest Shi'i jurist in Lebanon, died. The spiritual leadership of the Shi'i community was in need of a successor. Mughniyya, because of his solid scholarly upbringing, would have seemed a good candidate for the job. But the precedent set by his confrontation with the State undermined his chances, and he was preferred Musa as-Sadr, a younger 'Alim from Iran. How Sadr was appointed is still not

clear. But despite a recent account to the contrary, [3] it seems that Sadr was 'parachuted' from Iran, with the assent of the traditional Shi'i establishment in order to avoid the likes of Mughniyya to accede to the sensitive spiritual leadership. As expected, the position turned out to be central. It took some years for Sadr to consolidate social support around him, and in the period of his decisive ascendancy after 1970, he and Kamel al-As'ad were in open competition for the leadership of the Shi'i community. But for the foes of Mughniyya, particularly the landed families of the South, the priority two decades earlier was to avoid the nomination to a potentially powerful position of a man whom they felt was antagonistic to their rule. With the nomination of Sadr, the Zu'ama secured a few years of respite. And indeed, until his disappearance on a visit to Libya in 1978, Sadr never clashed head on with his erstwhile benefactors.[4]

As he was marginalized, Mughniyya was understandably embittered by the successive setbacks. But he continued to be part of the larger Shi'i world, particularly through prolific writing on Islamic themes, and contacts that ranged from the Sheikh of the Azhar to the Shi'i world of 'Ulama in Iran, Iraq, and Bahrain, where he often was invited to give lectures. In this section, three recurring themes in Mughniyya's works will be discussed.

1- Socio-economic stance: the Revolt

The position of Mughniyya in respect to the injustice wrought by the Lebanese South socio-economic situation was never separate from his personal financial troubles. From his early childhood, Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya was confronted with severe hardships, as both his father and mother died before he was ten, with no immediate family member to support him. Like many other bereaved children, he had to go for menial jobs in Beirut, and he ended up spending four years in the streets of the capital peddling out Arabic sweets he had learned to manufacture. For a young and ambitious Arab Shi'i in the first decades of the century, the only opportunity to acquire some learning was Najaf. At 25, Mughniyya headed to the Iraqi holy city in the hope of a more welcoming ground than the alleys of Beirut. But Najaf did not fare better, and the tableau depicted in Mughniyya's Trials illustrates the profound state of desolation in which the apprentice 'ulama had to toil:

I came to Najaf when it was a city of disease and poverty, with pale faces, ragged clothes, and crumbling houses filled with insects and scorpions, where the streets were narrow and filthy, the beggars at every door and corner , the drinking water carried from far away on donkeys and sold like bread and gas. Most Najaf resources consisted of trusts, charities and fifths (akhmas) coming from outside and from visitors and mourners that reached the valley of peace from various points of the world.[5]

Najaf offered nonetheless some kind of protection , as the most forlorn student was "in the worst of circumstances able to get enough bread, a small room in the city for free, and a knowledgeable and helping teacher".[6] After eleven years of study, Mughniyya headed back to Jabal 'Amil to take up the position of an older brother who died, as a religious scholar in the village of Ma'raka.[7] Again, the village did not fare particularly well, and the miserable situation of the whole of Jabal 'Amil was this time the object of the first book of Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya, The Present situation of Jabal 'Amil, published in Beirut in 1947.[8]

In his memoirs, some telling excerpts have been chosen to illustrate how Mughniyya perceived the Lebanese South. Thus, in 1945, noted Mughniyya, the cholera hit some of the villages of the South so heavily that in a city of 400 inhabitants like Majdel Zanoun, 70 perished without the central government sending one medic or a pill of quinine.9

But the tone of Mughniyya rang more of revolt than pity, and his discourse, already then, had a striking revolutionary tone. Everything, he wrote , reminded him of ‘Abd ar-Rahman al-Kawakibi 10. It is the fault of the people who play slaves to the masters: "Worker, how can you spend the day at loss, and live throuh the night with hunger! You cannot even find work to buy a loaf of bread... And if for hunger you escape to Palestine, they throw you in the dark prison... As if you were a war convict!" 11

There is no room for obedience in this context. The call of Mughniyya is a call of revolt against the State and the deputies who (mis)represent it:

We do not want from the deputies of the South that they blindly serve (ta’assabu) a community against another community, a person against the other, or a region against another region. We do not ask them to make of Jabal ‘Amil another America. We want Jabal ‘Amil to be an integral part of Lebanon with its rights and its duties, so that the schools of Jabal ‘Amil compare with the schools of Lebanon, its roads with Lebanon’s roads, and its hospitals with Lebanon’s hospitals. So when history judges (us), all the parts of the Lebanese republic will be measured with the same yardstick...12

Besides the importance given to the necessity of social and economic change, this first work is indicative of Mughniyya’s scope of Lebanese nationalism. Although he does not forget the arbitrariness of French rule, it is on the basis of reversing the legacy of an area whose name was changed from Jabal ‘Amil to "South", and breaking from its status of "colony" (musta’mara) to the new State that the call for change operates. The regional context however, and the Israeli problem in particular were not forgotten.

2- The regional context: Arab unity and Israel

Most of Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya’s life was spent in a Middle East dominated by a call for Arab unity. It is only towards the end of his life, with the success of the Iranian revolution, that this Arab dimension was challenged by an Islamic internationalism. Mughniyya generally toed in the line of Arab support, and his criticism and hopes are articulated on the premise of Arabism. With the resurgence of the Islamic political message, when the clouds of revolution started gathering decisively in 1978 Iran, Mughniyya echoed the new trend in one of his last texts, "Our Weapon is the Qur’an". It is time, he wrote in this article, that we turn to Islam for the solution : "There is no way to victory and salvation except through struggle, solidarity and sacrifice under the banner of Islam... The salvation of Arabs and Muslims lies in the return to an Islam valid for all times and places" 13

Yet a closer look to Mughniyya’s attitudes to South Lebanon reveals a strong dose of realism. In his last years, when the disputes between the Palestinians and the Shi’is of the Lebanese South had turned into pitched battles, the Southerners’ resentment against the Palestinian activities against Israel from their Lebanese sanctuary was shared by Mughniyya:

Palestinian leaders declare that whatever happens, they will not leave the Lebanese South. This means that they provoke Israel so that Israel destroys and occupies the South. Or so that Israel returns the land to the Palestinians. Knowing Israel's aggressive and expansionist goals, is that not a strange Palestinian logic! As if you would tell the peaceful inhabitants of a quiet house: I want to blow up your house over your heads not for anything but to prove my existence in the world. 14

That, in Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya's mind, Israel was total evil makes no doubt. But his answers to the Jewish state were couched in general calls for unity and strength between Arab, then Arab-Muslim countries. On this course of events, however, Mughniyya had little sway, and when nationalism, the security and welfare of the South, and internationalism, in the form of support of the Palestinian revolution on Lebanese territory, clashed, nationalism came first. This tug-of-war between nationalism and internationalism had become in the late 70's the common dilemma of most speakers from Jabal 'Amil.

3- Mughniyya's debate with Khomeini over the governance of the Islamic State

It was expected that with the fame attained in the Muslim, and especially in the Shi'i world, Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya would take position in the debate that raged in the late 70's over the nature of power in an Islamic state, and the question of wilayat al-faqih. Already in 1961, Mughniyya had contributed to the debate in Ash-Shi'a wal-Hakimun, but the book was more in the tradition of an "introduction to Shi'ism" shared by such luminaries of twentieth century like Muhammad Husain Kashif al-Ghata' and Muhammad Husain Tabataba'i. 15 A few years later, these reflections were supplemented by Imamat 'Ali bayn al-'Aql wal-Qur'an and al-Islam wal-'Aql. 16 In these books, Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya discussed the role of the Imams as leaders as the community, and of the jurists in the absence of the Imams, and reached the important conclusion that would constitute the thrust of his disagreement with Khumaini: until the return of the Mahdi, no person, not even the 'ulama, can claim supremacy over the body politic. As an example, Mughniyya cited the fact that the various denominations that apply to the juristic hierarchy at the higher echelon betray the uncertainty of the existence of a sole spiritual leader, 17 let alone of his political supremacy. In one instance even, in 1961, Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya had even insisted on the fact that the twelve Imams themselves had often steered clear from such involvement:

The Imami traditions concerning this [total political leadership] are innumerable. In them we find the secret of the great 'ulama and religious maraje''s aloofness (ibti'ad) from politics and people in power, for they have transmitted this tradition from father to son on the example of the pure Imams.18

The background of this controversy started in the early sixties, when the last 'recognized' supreme marja', Husain Burujerdi, died in Iran without an undisputed successor. Then, several renowned Shi'i jurists claimed his legacy, among whom figured the Iranian Ruhullah Khumeini and Muhammad Kazim Shari'at Madari, and the Iraqi Muhsin al-Hakim and Abul-Qasem al-Khu'i. The succession was never settled, as there exists no mechanism, except fame and knowledge, that allows a marja' to be coopted to the supreme position. The problem was soon complicated by the emergence of a militant wing among some high 'ulama, Khumaini in Qum and to a lesser extent Hakim in Najaf. In June 1963, the Iranian militancy led to the first major confrontation with the Shah, with a toll of several thousands killed in the repression. Khumaini was exiled, first to Turkey, then to Najaf, where he came under the protection of Hakim and discreetly joined the then emerging militant younger

‘ulama, most prominent among whom were Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr, Muhammad Husain Fadlallah, Muhammad Mahdi Shamseddin, and two sons of Hakim, Muhammad Baqer and Mahdi.

Mughniyya in Lebanon did not form part of these circles. In fact, he became closely associated with Shari’at Madari, who invited him to lecture in Iran in 1976. It is possible that the differences with Khumaini dated from that period, though the connections between the two jurists cannot be reconstituted with precision. When in the last year of his life, the star of Khumaini rose decisively in the East, Mughniyya felt compelled to articulate his institutional views in answer to the Iranian leader, and he wrote Al-Khumaini wad-Dawla al-Islamiyya, published in Dar at-tali’a in Beirut in 1979. 19

In this book, Mughniyya does not dispute the necessity of linking religion and politics. In this, in contrast with the quote earlier mentioned, he is consistent with a lifelong militancy, and falls in agreement with the basic argument of Khumaini’s lectures. But the details of the institutional role of the jurist in the Islamic state are considerably different from Khumaini’s conclusions. In al-Hukuma al-Islamiyya, Khumaini proposed the political involvement and leadership of the jurist. Mughniyya disagrees with this proposition, on the ground of a syllogism based on the essential difference between present-day ‘ulama and the twelve Imams. It is true, he says, that the Twelve Imams of the Shi’i tradition exercised (in theory) total spiritual and political power. But the jurist of today has neither the rank of the Imam, nor the possibility to act as one. Since he is not equivalent to the Imam, who is by essence "free from doubt and error" (ma’sum) 20, then "inevitably the difference in the premise will have an effect on the consequences. Thus the ma’sum has authority (wilaya) on adult and child (al-kabir was-saghir), and even on the just jurist (al-mujtahid al-’adel), but there is no wilaya of the mujtahid on the sane adult (al-Balegh ar-Rashed)" 21. This perspective sets Mughniyya at a fundamental variance from the received interpretation of the khumainist theory of wilayat al-faqih.

But in another passage, Mughniyya seems to retain for the faqih in time of Occultation an overarching control in the Islamic society, as would be best exemplified by the role assigned to a council of ‘ulama in the 1906 Persian Constitution. Citing Shari’at Madari, Mughniyya sees in the ‘ulama a body of legal specialists who, like modern constitutional courts, make certain that the laws passed by the legislators are not contrary to the shari’a: "When Parliament passes laws, then the opinion of the majority must freely secure [through the council of jurists] that these laws are not in contradiction with Islam, since the absolute majority of citizens are Muslims." 22

It remains unclear whether Mughniyya would have wanted to ultimately reduce the role of the jurist to a mere consultative voice, or whether the institutional role is advocated in terms of a body that functions as a constitutional court. 23 What is certain however is that the jurist’s role is more restrained than in Khumaini’s theory, and certainly in his role as defined in the Constitution of 1979. But even this last statement needs to be qualified, for Khumaini’s lectures of 1969-70 were themselves relatively ambiguous as to the exact role of the faqih, and the practice of government in the Iranian Revolution remains riddled with institutional ambiguity. But Mughniyya’s dissent, along with his friend Shari’at Madari, will always constitute a recognized juristic counterpoint to the advocates of total power for the Shi’i clerical hierarchy. These hesitations also appear in other writings of the Shi’i world, as in the discourse of several ‘Amili ulama, particularly when they are confronted, like Shamseddin and Fadlallah in Lebanon, by a religiously heterogenous society.

IV- Thought in times of war: from periphery to centre

In 1967, the Arab defeat opened up to Israeli expansion all adjacent countries but Lebanon. In hindsight, two interrelated major shifts have emerged as the most significant consequences of the six-day war on the atmosphere of the Middle East: (1) the end of Panarabism as the way to salvation, with as the foremost consequence, the deepening of various nationalisms; and (2) the destruction of ideals of socialism as movers of the populations, with the vying for their replacement of brands of militant Islam throughout the Middle East.[1] For the dissatisfied citizens of the South of Lebanon, these two characteristics of the new equation represented also the two poles of a similar identity quandary. The choice can be summarized in the following manner: if action against Israel across the Lebanese border were permitted (with the certainty of ruthless retaliation), the internationalist pole would prevail. If action is precluded, nationalism, i.e. the strict adherence to the sole Lebanese territory as the frontier of liberation, would become dominant. But the specific Lebanese situation, especially in terms of the absence of territorial loss to Israel, determined a relatively peculiar development. [2]

In terms of militancy, the quandary appears at various junctures of the post 67 war, and is repeated time and again on very different levels. At present, it is easy to discern the significant split on the Shi'i scene between the two dominant military groups in terms of this nationalist-internationalist paradigm, with the Amal movement prone to a "Lebanese-nationalist" stance, while the Hizb Allahis appear to put nationalist allegiance second to an Islamic form of internationalism centered on Iran.

But even these general tendencies do not take into account the facts of the hesitations within each movement. As in the case of Mughniyya, a reading of the texts of such emerging leaders of the Shi'i community as Muhammad Mahdi Shamseddin and Muhammad Husain Fadlallah discloses ambiguities and hesitations, particularly in terms of the "Lebanese / regional-Islamic" allegiances.

There is a further complication constituted by the nature of the relation of these two religious figures to the militant groups. The presumed leadership of Hizbullah ascribed to Fadlallah [3], which led to the CIA-sponsored attempt on his life on March 8, 1985, and the death in the explosion of some 80 people, should be reassessed in the light of a dátour in the intricacies of the structure of the Shi'i hierarchy.

A Caveat on Organization and Leadership

After the Usuli-Akhbari controversy of the 18th century, as earlier noted, the Usuli dominance impregnated the hierarchy of the Shi'i 'Ulama, the mujtahids, with a loose but relatively well-ordained structure at the helm of which the maraje', the Ayatollahs, sit. Besides this internal articulation of the religious establishment, the external relation of the clergy to the laity was also precised. In theory, there are in the society as a whole two categories: the mujtahids and the muqallids. The muqallids follow, imitate, and emulate the

mujtahids, who lay the rules according to their interpretation of the tradition. Only a mujtahid has the right to say what the legal prescriptions are, but the muqallid has the choice of following whoever living mujtahid he or she chooses. Because there is generally a number of mujtahids at any one time, the choice, which in theory is compulsory -and also entails the paying of the Sahm al-Imam (the share of the Imam, whom a mujtahid is supposed to represent as Na'ib al-Imam, vice-Imam)- is fairly wide. Furthermore, there is no institutionalized control over the muqallids. Taqlid, the following of the law as defined in the mujtahid's interpretation, as well as taxation, are deprived of penalty, since the uneasy relation with the Authority in power at the time of the Occultation of the Twelfth Imam bars the mujtahids from access to State coercion. Furthermore, a muqallid can shift whenever he or she wants to a different mujtahid. Thus is the whole structure, even in theory, in constant flux.

In practice, this means that, in a situation in which, unlike post-revolutionary Iran, the hierarchy of 'ulama has not blended with State power, the community of Shi'is is divided across a number of allegiances, and these allegiances are far from being stable. In the case of Iraq and Lebanon, the operation of the mujtahids is therefore constrained by high volatility, and the relation of the muqallids to their mujtahid tends to follow a pattern akin to a Weberian charismatic model. There is no party that channels the relationship structurally, and the barometer of taqlid will vary according to the strengths and weaknesses of the various elements that constitute charismatic appeal. More concretely, the relationship of Shamseddin and Fadlallah (and other less renowned religious figures of the Shi'i community), to gatherings of followers in structured organizations such as the 'Party of God' is determined by historical forms of Usuli Shi'ism which make a "party" an oddity. It is in the light of this uneasy relationship with the emerging organizations of which Hizbullah is the prototype that the constant rejection by Fadlallah of his association with Hizbullah must be understood. Fadlallah does not need Hizbullah, because a close association with this or any other party means formally a reduction of his followers by as many muqallids who do not adhere to 'the Party'.

Two other considerations make the Lebanese 'Alim wary of such an association. One consideration stems from his Najaf experience. From the late 50's until he left Najaf for Beirut in 1966, Fadlallah participated with a number of militant 'ulama from Najaf, foremost among whom was Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr, in the construction of the new revolutionary message of Islam. The focal point of this collaboration was the newly founded journal al-Adwa'. [4] Sadr used to write the first editorial, and Fadlallah the second editorial, [5] until the combination of pressures from the state and from the quietist older 'ulama of the city led them to abandon writing in the journal, then to its complete cessation. At the same time, the first rumors of the existence of a party called Hizb ad-Da'wa al-Islamiyya ('Party of the Islamic Call') started in Iraq. The Da'wa Party became famous twenty years later, when, on April 8, 1980, a decision of the ruling Ba'th condemned retroactively all Da'wa members to death. At the head of the executed was Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr, who was buried in Najaf on the 9th. [6] Without going into the intricate and obscure history of the Da'wa party, it is sufficient to point at some of the relevance of the Da'wa experience for the career of people like Fadlallah and Shamseddin. A party like the Da'wa proved to be in Iraq more of a nuisance than a blessing, as it ultimately led to the execution of its presumed leader,

Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr. Similarly, neither Fadlallah nor Shamseddin have the means to control the actions of enthusiastic elements in a loose and unruly organization which, as religious figures, they refuse to head. In the same way Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr had to pay for the supposed action of a party which he had in 1974, according to some sources, denounced, Fadlallah and Shamseddin are worried by an involvement (and in the case of Fadlallah, the March 8 attempt on his life is a case in point) they do not seek, and do not ultimately need. The historical Shi'i structure offers a more comfortable, and less dangerous, shell for leadership.

The other consideration on the uneasy relation of the mujtahids to a formal party is communitarian, and reflects the constraints of the Lebanese situation. Partisan politics, in the strict sense, cannot avoid the bitter sectarian realities of the Sunni-Shi'i divide in Beirut. Whether the religious leaderships want it or not, the symbolism of community discourses is unavoidable, and as Shi'is they will always advocate 'Ashura as a major reference of the identity built by the language. [7] When they try, as does Fadlallah, and to a lesser extent, Shamseddin, to transcend the divide by an Islamic, as contrasted with a Shi'i, appeal, reality on the ground and the harsh gregarious instincts in times of trouble quickly do away with long and patient efforts. For these leaders to complicate their situation by the sponsorship of a party as filled with contradictory currents as Hizbullah means being condemned sooner or later to bow to the logic of the Lebanese ground. Standing aloof from party politics is a much safer and a more sensible position. But this will appear more clearly in the discussion of the forms of the Lebanese state that they advocate.

This caveat on the relationship of Shamseddin and Fadlallah to Islamic parties, particularly to Hizbullah, once precised, there remains that, in several instances, their positions coincide. This must be constantly borne in mind. But in many other equally important questions, such as the attitude towards the Syrian government, Hizbullah and its presumed leader are at odds. [8]

Shamseddin and Fadlallah must also be appraised in contrast to the other power contenders on the Lebanese scene. In the same way that Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya's significance appears most clearly in contrast with the traditional leadership, their politics are premised on the need to make a difference with the other dominant segment on the Shi'i scene, the Amal movement under Nabih Berri. From the vantage-point of the preeminence of Lebanese nationalism, Berri regularly pays homage to Khomeini and consistently since 1984 to Arab Syria under Hafez al-Asad,[9] but the "nationalist" thrust of his discourse appears best in contradistinction with Fadlallah and Shamseddin's Islamic "internationalism". A closer look at some of the discourses of these leaders will help assess their choices and hesitations. First however a word should be said about the absence of constructive economic programs so prominent in the writings of dissenters like Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya.

1- Socio-economic stance: the redundancy

It can be argued that, by the time the institutional structure exploded in Lebanon and was replaced by unruly militias prone to repetitive fragmentation, the socio-economic discourse

had become completely hollow. This situation is the more so ironic in view of the critical downward turn of the Lebanese economy since 1983.

When Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya uttered his dismay at the situation of Jabal ‘Amil, a concomitant program of social and economic change naturally followed. In contrast, in times of trouble, the socio-economic discourse of change was almost completely neutralized, not so much in the sense that it became absent from the discourse, but in that it was the redundant common denominator of competing groups. The talk on poverty and on the deprived (Mahrumin, Mustad’afin), has turned into a ritualistic element of speech among the new Shi’i forces. Whether in Amal or in Hizb Allah, the starting premise is not different in any way from the themes articulated much more eloquently by Mughniyyah 40 years earlier, and constantly repeated since in the alternative Shi’i groups. But the social conscience of economic disparities in the South and in the Southern suburbs of Beirut was shared by all the competing factions after the demise of the traditional forces represented by the landed families. Amal and Hizb Allah militants (as well as the communists), have so unanimously incorporated miserabilism in their message (as each of them claims to represent the true Mahrumin) that on the socio-economic plane, it is difficult to find essential differences between their discourses, or a reason to ascribe the representativity of the poor to one group or the other.

For Amal and Hizb Allah, the avenues for change remain misty, because they have by choice avoided a commitment to a specific economic system. Beyond the generalities of "social justice" become so ingrained in any postulate of grievances, commitment to social change is so imprecise as to be merely limited to being a vague introduction to the call for constitutional change. To add to the irony of the situation, the unexpected convolutions in the wealths of Middle Eastern states have further blurred the economic contents of the programs, as Iran has been pouring political money for the groups it deems to be closest to its ideological outlook. Reports of relatively high salaries to Hizb Allah militants, as opposed to the dwindling wages of the rest of the militias have turned the rank-and-file of the Mahrumin into the best financially rewarded armed militants of the Lebanese Warlord scene. [10] Twists of reality have added to the ideological hollowness of the socio-economic message for justice. The structural social change has been replaced by regional and institutional concerns.

2- Regional Context- Attitudes towards Israel

Shamseddin and Fadlallah do not come out at variance with the usual rhetoric about Israel. Their rejection of the Jewish State is consonent with a solidly anchored tradition of the Middle East in the twentieth century, which looks at Israel as the prolongation of the ‘bad’ Jews of the Qur’an. [11] Israel in this approach is over Palestine. But Palestine is not Arab, or anti-imperialist in the Marxist acception, or Palestinian in the sense usually associated with the emergence of the PLO. Palestine is Muslim. [12] Israel is, in a sentence that has become a slogan, "the Cancer of the Middle East" [13], and as such must be suppressed from the map. The manifesto released by Hizb Allah in 1985 adopts the same stance, [14] and readapts to the Islamic ideology the ‘three Nos’ posture of the post 67 War Khartum conference. [15]

The position of Hizb Allah proper, in so far as its official discourse is unilateral, does not deserve to be discussed at length: the rejection of Israel is plain, simple, and total. By contrast, Fadlallah and Shamseddin's positions are thought through and merit consideration for their nuances. But they must be taken in historical context.

Muhammad Mahdi Shamseddin and the Confrontation with Israel

A recently published article in the journal of the Lebanese Union of Islamic Students, Al-Muntalaq, shows Shamseddin's perception of the confrontation with Israel in the aftermath of the 1973 October War. Much talk revolved then around the projected conference of Geneva, and the article was written seemingly when its author was convinced by the likelihood of an impending peace. 16

As in the case of the young Mughniyya, most striking in the article is the emphasis on the confrontation with Israel from an Arab, and not from an Islamic point of view. For Shamseddin, it is the rebirth of the "conquering quality (maziyyat al-Iqtiham) in the Arab personality" which characterizes the October war. The Superpowers have been trying to "defeat the Arabs" 17. With peace, "the Jews will deal..with the racial non-Arab and non-Arabized (Ghayr 'arabiyya wa Ghayr Mu'arraba) minorities".18 Even a pure Islamic reference is put in an Arabic framework : "And Jews have an Arab precedent: in Medine they were encouraging the spirit of rivalry between the Aws and Khazraj tribes before Islam". 19

Also, the article is interesting in terms of the transfer of the rejectionist stance from the military to the cultural plane. Shamseddin was not content with talks with Israel, but he appears in this text to be resigned to them delivering peace. He is therefore primarily concerned by the post-military confrontation. The thrust of the argument is built around the necessity of standing up to Israel in time of peace in order to avoid the inevitable Israeli incursion into Arab societies that will be caught off guard by Israel's "new style" (al-Uslub al-Jadid):

The new style that will be practised by the Jews rests in our previsions on turning the Arab and the realities of his life into a positive factor of this new style, and an element of its success, within the atmosphere of peace that will take place between the two peoples and their political institutions. 20

The rest of the article is devoted to discussing the structure of the cultural, paramilitary, and educational institutions to withhold the wave coming with the new style. Shamseddin calls on the Arab league to choose a group of specialists in education, communication and journalism, military people and religious specialists ('Ulama' ad-Din), as well as psychology and sociology specialists, in order to offer "a comprehensive plan that secures the protection of the Arab individual and the nation (umma) from the mental and non-mental invasion resulting from the dangers of peace". 21

But these "Arab" positions represent only one aspect of the attitude of Shamseddin towards the Jewish State. Because of the turmoil in the South, he often had the occasion to reformulate his views on the confrontation with Israel, and his tone became increasingly "Islamic".

In a speech on the occasion of the death of Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya, Shamseddin warned against further troubles in the South, and called for the entry of the Lebanese army to the area, lest the deteriorating situation allows Israel to add "a new hostage next to Jerusalem and the Golan...Any worsening in the South, which has reached with its inhabitants the pit will lead to its loss, and to the loss of the whole country: after the catastrophe occurs, God forbid, there will certainly be poets to eulogize the loss of the South and writers to mourn it". 22

In this particular instance, Shamseddin was echoing Mughniyya's own realistic attitude shortly before his death. The important and most pressing issue was to salvage Jabal 'Amil from Israeli encroachments and the likelihood of a new invasion. When in June 1982, Ariel Sharon marched into Saida and Beirut, there was no room left for accommodation. In early 1983, Shamseddin issued a fatwa "declaring total civil resistance against Israel". 23 By then, the Islamic reference had become dominant, and the resistance talk, bolstered by events on the ground, turned into the main theme of Shamseddin's exhortations. But many other secular and clerical figures were part of the choir. How Muhammad Husain Fadlallah deals with the confrontation will also shed some light on some of the constraining dimensions reality exerts over the rejectionist discourse.

Muhammad Husain Fadlallah, Hizbullah, and the order of priorities

Both in terms of the ideological substance of the anti-Israeli message, and in terms of the attitude towards Israel per se, Fadlallah's discourses are essentially different from other Shi'i protagonists. When for example Mughniyya articulated his rejection of Israel in the 50's and 60's, his position was in line with a regional background that knew little dissent in terms of the total rejection of the Jewish state. As argued earlier, by 1979, Mughniyya had introduced in his discourse a strong dose of realism as how to deal with Israel from the South of Lebanon, whose people bore the brunt of Israel's "preemptive retaliatory" policies with little to be satisfied about in terms of revolutionary gains. On the Lebanese scene, the resistance to Israel in the South has been portrayed by Fadlallah since 1983, as the only ray of hope against the gloom and doom that pervade the area. Not one major declaration of the Najaf scholar omits the reference to the glory of the Islamic resistance. In this, the correspondence between the positions of Fadlallah and Hizbullah is complete.

But if for then the old straight rejectionist discourse was still valid, this internationalist stance needs to be qualified.

It is true that all the actors on the Lebanese Shi'i scene are committed in their rhetoric to relentless struggle to free the South. Not all however manifest the same "going all the way to Jerusalem" position as appears in Fadlallah 's (or Khumaini's) discourse, and in Hizb Allah declarations.

The distinction revolves around the "boundaries of liberation". Although both Fadlallah and Berri would wish the liberation to cover South Lebanon and Palestine, the tendency has been for Berri to limit liberation boundaries to the South and avoid its extension to Northern Palestine. 24 And even in terms of Lebanese territory liberation, these wishes have receded before other more pressing concerns on the Amal agenda, as the resistance effort was temporarily sacrificed to the struggle against the state as represented by the Phalangists and to the fight against the resurgence of Palestinian militancy in the inconclusive episode of the Camps War (1984-1986).

For Fadlallah, in apparent contrast, the Islamic resistance in the South, and its eventual prolongation into Israel are the basic premises of political action. This is clear from his writings and declarations. 25 But even then, the rhetoric has been watered down by two factors which indicate how the pressures of reality that encumbered Berri and Amal also affect the 'purity' of Hizb Allah and the radicals.

In the first place, it is difficult to see a pattern of attacks against Israel that could distinguish the followers of Hizbullah from the Amal warriors. Both militants stop short at the border, and so far, there has been no instance of Israeli territory infiltration by either group.

But more significantly, the boundaries of liberation come as a consequence of a course as constraining to Hizb Allah as it is to Amal and Berri. The policy of resistance for both groups is ultimately second to their main concern, Lebanese central power. Liberation is used as a tool of legitimization for both groups, and is not pursued per se. For Hizb Allah, as for Amal,control comes first, and liberation second. In other words, despite the rhetoric, what is hoped for in the resistance efforts in the South depends on the perceived outcome in terms of popularity and preeminence that results from driving the Israelis out. Hizb Allah, therefore, tries to be the only kernel of resistance in the South. It is in the context of the contrast between a primary scene, internal, and a supportive "external" one, that Hizb Allah tries, with some degree of success, to monopolize the Southern resistance. The wave of assassinations of communists and other leftist militants in 1984-5, in Beirut and in the South, even though these movements were particularly instrumental in the early organization of armed resistance against the occupiers, 26 presents some indication of how the rhetorical insistence on liberation comes second in the order of priorities of the Islamic movement. That is not to say that the liberation discourse is for Hizb Allah a simple veil to the struggle for power. The two issues are not divorced in the ideology: but the liberation of the South is considered second to an essential goal, the establishment of the Islamic state. In that, the Islamic groups are not different from any other of the groups of the Lebanese civil wars scene. They all have always considered the relation to the 'foreigner' second to the bid for internal power. Under the heading "the Islamic resistance is a means and not an end", an advocate of the Islamic state has recently explained this order of priorities:

The great victories that the Islamic resistance has realized against Israel, and the sacrifices that the inspired fighters have offered in their holy operations ('amaliyyatihum al-jihadiyya) against the Zionist occupation and its agents, help the Muslims take power (Istilam daffat al-Hukm) and get rid of the mischief of the Maronite regime, especially as these victories and

accomplishments need a power that protects them and keeps sentinel to defend them from rotting away and disappearing. 27

3- Forms of the Lebanese State

In theory, Shamseddin, Fadlallah, as well as the shadowy leaders of Hizbullah and other groups, are all working to establish an Islamic Republic, which they define as a State ruled by Islamic Law. But there is little agreement beyond this common denominator.

The starting point of the divergences is the model of Khumaini's wilayat al-faqih. While the radical Shi'i groups seem to stand by the pure Iranian system, the ways the Najaf companions approach the model are indicative of intellectual wariness, if not disagreement, with the shape of the Islamic state as advocated and practised by the Iranian clerics.

In a sense, a minimum of dissent from the Iranian model is inevitable in multiconfessional countries like Lebanon or Iraq. In Iraq for instance, the discussions in 1982 over the program of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq show how the Iranian model was not wholeheartedly adopted by a Shi'i opposition (which is nonetheless totally dependent on Teheran) which cannot ignore its inappropriateness for the Iraqi Sunni population. 28 In Lebanon, this problem is further complicated by the presence of an important Christian population. And unlike Iraq, the Shi'i community of Lebanon remains a minority when compared to the aggregate of the other confessional groups.

This position of 'relative minority' bears on the theory of wilayat al-faqih in two ways. (a) Like Iraq, there is a Sunni-Shi'i problem: the different clerical structure between the Sunnis and the Shi'is, and the Shi'i mujtahids' traditional independence from the State 29, give wilayat al-faqih a strong Shi'i ring, and render it sectarian. (b) But in addition to the Sunni-Shi'i differences, the Christian community in Lebanon is inherently impervious to the appeal of the Islamic theoreticians.

To the Sunni-Shi'i divide, Fadlallah answers with a universalist Islamic appeal, in which Shi'ism is portrayed as one further school of Islam, neither superior nor inferior to the other Sunni schools. But this attitude only postpones the issue of political dominance. The way out for Fadlallah is an overarching reference to Islam, which operates as an umbrella beneath which several possibilities ought to be explored. "Whatever the difference between the styles of action,...there is no stopping at one particular model... There must be taken into account the necessity of reality without adhering to just one model, or to narrow models, except for the limits, or the general lines, as they are defined by the rules of the law (Ahkam ash-Shari'a)". 30

In this context, the institutional model conveyed by the Shura (the consultation process among the Muslim companions of the Prophet, generally understood in modern Islamic theory as an elected Assembly, and perceived to be more of a Sunni than a Shi'i constitutional point of departure) becomes one of the avenues for change, with weaknesses and strenghths depending, he adds, on the "objective conditions of the Islamic situation" (ash-Shurut al-mawdu'iyya 'alas-Saha al-Islamiyya). Similarly, prescriptions of the Shi'i theory of Wilayat al-Faqih, with the necessary abiding by the decision of the mujtahid, are relativized in Fadallah's strategy by the many problems of the system's articulations. In particular, he

discusses the issue of the silence of the faqih, or the multiplicity of fuqaha’ and the inevitable contradiction of their decisions. [31] In this way, Fadlallah succeeds in relativizing the importance of the theory without rejecting it out of hand. In his views, all the practicable routes towards the Islamic state should be explored.

In the case of Shamseddin, there has been from early on an effort at an institutional theory of the Islamic state. His first work, when he still was a young scholar in Najaf, is a book on the system of governance in Islam. This work is in the intra-Islamic polemology tradition, and Shamseddin goes at great length to vindicate the Shi’i, as opposed to the Sunni, "system of governance". The Shi’i State is portrayed as a "divine State" ("Dawla Ilahiyya), in which the leader, the Imam, has been appointed by God through the wishes of the Prophet Muhammad. The Sunni State, devoid of this God-inspired succession mechanism, is a "divine human State" ("Dawla Ilahiyya Bashariyya"), in which the Imam is chosen by men without any divine intervention. After long historical discussions, Shamseddin comes to a radical result : "And the importance of this is to reach a definite conclusion: Islam has worked to establish the divine State on earth." [32]

Nazam al-Hikm is however an early work, written years before the ‘alim had to grapple with the Lebanese situation. When he went back to Beirut, in 1969, to second Musa as-Sadr at the Supreme Shi’i Council, the confrontation with a fragmentized confessional society triggered a more sophisticated approach to institutional matters. [33] The main problem was not so much intra-Muslim polemics as the exclusion of Shi’is from an effective place in State institutions dominated by Christian Maronites. Shamseddin’s arguments moved towards a "Christian-Muslim dialogue", which opened a common ground with Christianity against materialist messages like communism, and more importantly, against the secular appeal. In 1980, Shamseddin published a book against "Secularism", [34] which he considers as one of the anti-religious doctrines of the communist brand. For him, the opposition to the confessional State, Ta’ifiyya, must not verse into secularism, which disavows religion. Instead, society and the State must return to the souls of both Christianity and Islam, within "pluralism" al-’Adadiyya , a concept Shamseddin coined in 1985. For this, Shamseddin developed "the general lines of the system of a pluralist democracy based on the principle of consultation", which, in essence, have much in common with other reformist programs put forward by the Lebanese "secular" opposition. [35]

This is a far cry from the theory of wilayat al-faqih, but these positions are an answer to Lebanon’s realities. In the Lebanese melting-pot, wilayat al-faqih is suspect for Sunnis, and a non-starter for Druzes and Christians. Fadlallah and Shamseddin are faced with a daunting dilemma. If they reject Khumaini’s theory outright, the Iranian model is dangerously undermined. [36] If, on the contrary, they wholeheartedly embrace it, the non-Shi’i population of Lebanon, as well as part of the non-clerical Shi’i leadership, are up-in-arms against such a proposal. The only narrow road left to them is a constitutional non-committal, or, what amounts to the same, paying lip-service to two or more contradictory positions. Thus Shamseddin will talk of ‘Adadiyya and of the legitimate fears of the Christians that should be satisfied, [37] and Fadlallah will constantly call for a dialogue with the Christians for the values shared with the Muslims. The vindication of an Islamic state will remain, but the emphasis is on the "spiritual", and the periodization, as in the case of Israel, is one of longue duráe. [38]

These nuances are important. It is difficult to expect from Fadlallah or Shamseddin to clearly take position against the Khumaini theory of wilayat al-faqih. When Mughniyya undermined this theory, he was clearly siding with Shari'at Madari against Khumaini. For Fadlallah and Shamseddin, too much Shi'i popular feeling in Lebanon is identified with Imam Khumaini to be openly at variance with him, and their alignment with the Islamic Republic of Iran is inevitable, although a careful reading of their advocacy shows that they rarely miss an occasion to praise Syria along with Iran. Furthermore, such a theory as applied in Lebanon would secure their pre-eminence: as vice-president of the Supreme Shi'i council, (and in effect, with the absence of Musa as-Sadr, the leader of the council) Shamseddin is the inevitable candidate for a Lebanese Islamic state leadership. And the intellectual fame of Fadlallah, whose supporters claim that in the learned Shi'i world, he is third after Khumaini and his teacher of Najaf Abul-Qasem al-Khu'i, as well as his exceptional popularity in Shi'i Lebanon, make him at least as prominent as Shamseddin in terms of clerical leadership. For both, the governance of the jurist is their governance.

Yet most of this debate is rhetorical. Until decisive changes in the Lebanese military-political situation allow for a clearer picture of strengths and weaknesses of each of the many protagonists, the Islamic theoreticians from Jabal 'Amil will not see their ideas discussed as serious platforms. Too much distrust has been harboured among and inside the communities, for an idea, however moderate, to be divorced from its bearer or the group that is confessionally identified with him. In a sense, Fadlallah and Shamseddin have come to realize these constraints. In a first stage, the theories derived from the studies at Najaf, or modelled after the Iranian enthusiasms, have been slowly watered down to avoid non-winning confrontations. In a second stage, the debate of ideas has been so pervaded by the stagnation on the ground as to sound, like the socio-economic grievances, hollow. Even the most attractive leitmotiv, the resistance to Israel, has been overtaken by priorities.

But whatever these limits, the intellectual saga of Jabal 'Amil is not over. Al-'Irfan continues to be published after 80 years, and Muhammad Mahdi Shamseddin and Muhammad Husain Fadlallah are writing as profusely as ever. But the intellectuals of Jabal 'Amil were pushed by the Lebanese tragedy into pure politics. Considering the constraints, it is not certain that this was a good investment of energies. Al-'Irfan's literary endeavours, Mughniyya's monumental study of the jurisprudence of Imam Ja'far as-Sadeq, Fadlallah's poetry and exegetical work on the Qur'an, and Shamseddin's historical studies on themes of the Husain revolution, might better survive Middle Eastern storms than the forays into institutional and strategic theories. But the need for these remains at present, though the answers will not come out solely from the South of Lebanon.

NOTES

I-

1- Ahmad Rida, "Banu ‘Amila" (The Sons of ‘Amila), al-’Irfan, 21, 1942, p.220. Rida’s text was at first delivered in a radio talk in Haifa, and this probably explains the reference to ‘Amili villages that went to Palestine. For a more recent, but similar geographical definition see Hasan al-Amin, "Jabal ‘Amil", al-’Irfan, 70:1, Jan.1982, p.3-4.

2- Salim Nasr puts the figure of the total Lebanese Shi’i community at 800,000 in the 1975, from 225,000 in 1948. "Mobilisation communautaire et symbolique religieuse: l’imam Sadr et les chi’ites du Liban (1970-1975)", in Olivier Carrá and Paul Dumont eds, Radicalismes Islamiques, L’Harmattan, Paris, 1985, Vol.1, p.127. Because of rapid population migrations, especially in the 60’s and 70’s, it is difficult to separate between Shi’is from Jabal ‘Amil and Shi’is who live in the suburbs of Beirut. But it would be fair to assume that Bekaa Shi’is, especially from the regions of Baalback and Labwe, would total up to some 200,000 persons. A population survey was reported in 1921 by al-’Irfan, mentioning a total of 130,361 inhabitants for the "District of South Lebanon", among whom 62,796 Shi’is, 13,397 Sunnis, 3,519 Druzes, 17,255 Maronites, 11,242 Catholics. Vol.7, 1921, p.438.

3- Frederic Hof, Galilee Divided: the Israel-Lebanon frontier 1916-1984, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1985.

4- In western languages, see especially, Elisabeth Picard, "De la Communautá-Classe ê la Rásistance ‘Nationale’. Pour une analyse du rèle des Chiites dans le Systëme Politique Libanais (1970-1985)", Revue Franõaise de Science Politique, 35:6, December 1985, pp.999-1027; Michael Gilsenan, Recognizing Islam, London, 1985, pp. 61-75; Helena Cobban, The Shia Community and the Future of Lebanon, American Institute of Islamic Affairs, Washington, 1985; Fouad Ajami, "Lebanon and its Inheritors", Foreign Affairs, 63:4, Spring 1985, pp.778-799; and his The Vanished Imam: Musa al Sadr and the Shia of Lebanon, London, 1986; As’ad Abu Khalil, "Druze, Sunni and Shiite Political Leadership in Present-day Lebanon", Arab Studies Quarterly, 7:4, Fall 85, pp.28-55, especially at 43-54; Augustus Norton, Amal and the Shi’a: Struggle for the Soul of Lebanon, Texas, 1987; Monika Pohl-Schóberlein, Die Schiitische Gemeinschaft des SôdLibanon (Gabal ‘Amil) innerhalb des Libanesischen Konfessionellen Systems, Berlin, Klaus Schwarz, 1986.

5- For a good survey of the intellectual production of Jabal ‘Amil in the twentieth century, see Muhammad Kazem Makki, al-Haraka al-Fikriyya wal-Adabiyya fi Jabal ‘Amil (‘The Intellectual and Literary Movement in Jabal ‘Amil’), 1st ed., Beirut, 1963; 2nd ed., Beirut, 1982; and on the research by Lebanese scholars on Jabal ‘Amil, his "Ba’da Majallat al-’Irfan, al-Buhuth al-Jami’iyya Marhala Jadida fi Nashr at-Turath al-’Amili" (After the journal al-’Irfan, University research starts a new stage in the dissemination of ‘Amili culture), al-’Irfan, 71:6, June 83, pp.31-40.

6- Sleiman Daher, "Silat al-’ilm bayna Dimashq wa Jabal ‘Amil", Majallat al-Majma’ al-’Ilmi al-’Arabi, (Damascus), Vol.9:5-6, 1929, p.269

7- For the early friendship between the head of the Lebanese Shi’i Supreme Council, Musa Sadr and the Syrian president Hafez al-Asad, see Ajami, The Vanished Imam, p.174; on the connection between Syrian ‘Alawi and Lebanese Shi’i ‘ulama, see an interesting pamphlet

included in al-'Irfan, 61:3, 1973, between pages 478 and 479, and entitled al-'Alawiyyun Shi'at Ahl al-Bayt: Bayan 'an Aqidat al-'alawiyyin ('The 'Alawis are Shi'is from the House of the Prophet [i.e. the descendants of 'Ali the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, and the first Imam of the Shi'is]: a Declaration on the doctrine of the 'Alawis'), Beirut, 1973. This declaration and the 'protection' of the authenticity of 'Alawi Islam must be put in the context of the accusation of heresy levelled in the early seventies against the 'Alawis by some Sunni circles in Damascus.

8- Albert Hourani, "From Jabal 'Amil to Persia", Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, 1986, p.136-7

9- Henri Lammens, "Les 'Perses' du Liban et l'origine des Mátoualis", Málanges de l'Universitá Saint-Joseph, XIV, 1929, pp.21-39. Also in Arabic in Mashreq, XXX, 1932, pp.633-639 and 772-778.

10- Some of the most significant works of these three figures will be referred to in sections III and IV infra. But they represent only one part of a very prolific career, and have been selected because of their relevance to the themes addressed in this paper. Other important works should be noted, particularly Mughniyya's Fiqh al-Imam Ja'far as-Sadeq (The Jurisprudence of Imam Ja'far as-Sadeq); Fadlallah's series on the interpretation of the Qur'an, Min Wahy al-Qur'an, of which 17 small volumes have been published. Fadlallah is also a poet, and some of his poetry has been assembled in Ya Zilal al-Islam (Shadows of Islam), and Qasa'ed lil-Islam wal-Hayat (Poems for Islam and Life), published in Beirut in 1977 and 1978.

II-

1- Nadim Shehadi, "The Idea of Lebanon- Economy and State in the Cánacle Libanais 1946-1954", Papers on Lebanon #5, Centre for Lebanese Studies, Oxford, 1987

2- Al-Aadab was first published in 1953, and represented during more than two decades a significant rallying forum for the intellectuals who, throughout the Arab world, were attracted to Nasserism and Panarabism.

3- For a synopsis of the journal's history, see Nizar az-Zein's editorial in al-'Irfan, February 1979, pp.131-138.

4- On this, and on the early 'Irfan, Tarif Khalidi, "Ash-Shaykh Ahmad 'Aref az-Zein wa Majallat al-'Irfan" ('Shaykh Ahmad 'aref az-Zein and the journal al-'Irfan'), in M. Buhairi ed., al-Hayat al-Fikriyya fil-Mashreq al-'arabi 1890-1939, Markaz Dirasat al-Wahda al-'arabiyya, Beirut, 1983, p.131 note 6. Published originally in M. Buhairi ed., Intellectual Life in the Arab East 1890-1939, American University of Beirut, 1981.

5- On Na'ini, see the comprehensive work of Abdul Hadi Hairi, Shi'ism and Constitutionalism in Iran, Brill, Leiden, 1977. Na'ini's work was serialized in part in al-'Irfan as "Al-Istibdad wad-Dimuqratiyya" ('Despotism and Democracy'), in 1930-31, Vol.20, pp.43-46, 172-180, 432-438, and Vol.21, pp.42-52, 534-552.

6- ‘Abd ar-Razzaq al-Hasani, Tarikh al-Wizarat al-’Iraqiyya (‘History of the Iraqi Governments’), 10 Volumes, al-’Irfan press, Saida, 1933- ; Tarikh al-’Iraq as-Siyasi al-Hadith (‘Modern Political History of Iraq’), 3 Volumes, Saida, 1367/1948; Al-’Iraq qadiman wa hadithan (Iraq, Past and Present), 2nd ed., al-’Irfan, Saida, 1956.

7- On the atmosphere in Najaf and Karbala, see my "Aux Origines de la Guerre Iran-Irak", Cahiers de l’Orient, (Paris), Autumn 1986, pp.119-136.

8- On Khumaini’s Najaf lectures, see Gregory Rose, "Velayat-e Faqih and the recovery of Islamic Identity in the thought of Ayatollah Khomeini", in N. Keddie ed., Religion and Politics in Iran, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1983, pp.166-188; Hamid Enayat, "Iran: Khumayni’s concept of the ‘Guardianship of the Jurisconsult’", in J. Piscatori ed., Islam and the Political Process, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp.160-180; Sami Zubaida, "The ideological conditions for Khomeini’s doctrine of government", Economy and Society, 11:2, (1982). These lectures have been translated in English by Hamid Algar, Islam and Revolution, Mizan Press, Berkeley, 1981, pp.27-151. Despite the importance of this work, and its obvious influence on contemporary Middle Eastern institutional debates, much uncertainty shrouds both its origin and its impact. It is still not known what the definitive text of Velayat-e Faqih (Persian), or al-Hukuma al-Islamiyya (Arabic) exactly is, and whether the original was in Persian or in Arabic. According to Rose, p. 177 n.44-45, citing Ahmad Khumaini, these lectures were delivered in Arabic, but Algar’s authoritative translation (as well as the French translation by Morteza Kotobi, Fayolle, Paris, 1979) is based on a Persian version published in Najaf in 1971. Two Arabic versions published in Beirut in 1979 differ from the Persian text and differ from each other. In any case the concept of ‘Wilayat al-Faqih’ is at the centre of all institutional discussions on the Islamic state in the present Shi’i world. But in terms of the impact on the Iranian constitution, although these lectures generally correspond to the institutional scheme governing Iran since 1979, I have elsewhere tried to indicate that a more direct and influential source was Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr’s Lamha Fiqhiyya Tamhidiyya ‘an Mashru’ Dustur al-Jumhuriyya al-Islamiyya fi-Iran, (‘A Preliminary Legal Note on the Project of a Constitution for the Islamic Republic in Iran), Ta’aruf, Beirut, 1979. Cf sections vii and viii of my "Religious Paradigms and the Institutional Claim of the ‘Ulama in Contemporary Iraq", Berkeley, California, October 1985, parts of which appear in "Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr and the Islamic Opposition in Contemporary Iraq", Third World Quarterly, forthcoming April 1988.

9- See infra

10- Mustafa al-Khumaini, then the most active of Khumaini’s two sons, was found dead in his room in Najaf in December 1979. It is on the occasion of the fourtieth commemoration of this event that was started, in Qum, the first of the fourty-day cyclical demonstrations that brought down the Shah’s system. Ahmad al-Khumaini has played a key role since the Revolution as a trusted spokesman for his father. Other regular visitors of Khumaini in his Najaf exile were Abul-Hasan Bani Sadr, the first President of the Republic, before the fall out with the Islamic Republic Party and his subsequent ousting; Mahmud Taleqani, dubbed the Red Ayatollah, who was second only to Khumaini in terms of importance and popularity, and an influential and innovative scholar; Mustafa Shamran, a key figure in the military revolutionary organization. He was Minister of Defense when he was killed near the Iran-Iraq front in 1981.

11- It is a rather simplistic way to think that the ‘tape cassettes’ were the decisive element in the overthrow of the Shah, as does the US Secretary of State: "We all remember the power of the Ayatollah’s message disseminated on tape cassettes in Iran; what could have a more profound impact in the Soviet bloc than similar cassettes, outside radio broadcasting, direct broadcast satellites, or photocopying machines ?" George Shultz, "New Realities and New Ways of Thinking", Foreign Affairs, 63:4, Spring 1985, p.716.

12- Except perhaps for the 1972 article of Hamid Algar ("The oppositional role of the ulama in Twentieth-century Iran", in N. Keddie ed., Scholars, Saints and Sufis, Berkeley, 1972. Originally delivered as a lecture in 1969), the importance of Khumaini’s opposition was little known outside Iranian circles. This article in any case stops with the 1963 Khordad revolt. The life of Khumaini in Najaf from 1964 to 1978 still awaits its chronicler.

13- Nizar az-Zein, "Sahib al-’Irfan fil-’Iraq" (‘The Owner of al-’Irfan in Iraq’), 54:5, October 1966, p.419-420. This account stands in sharp contrast with the tone of al-’Irfan in 1980, after the visit of the same Nizar by invitation from the Ba’th. In the 1980 report, not one of the great ‘ulama is mentioned. See Khudr ‘Abbas as-Salihi, "Jawlat al-Ustadh Nizar az-Zein fi Janubi al-’Iraq" (‘The Trip of Nizar az-Zein in Southern Iraq’), 68:1-2, Jan-Feb 1980, pp.17-27, especially at p.24: "And we talked about the establishment of security that rules Iraq at present thanks to the wise leadership of the [Ba’th] Party and the Revolution."

14- Muhammad Husain Kashif al-Ghata was for a long time one of the main ulama in Iraq. A great scholar and an innovator, he wrote several books on Shi’ism and Islam. The most well-known are Asl ash-Shi’a wa Usuluha (‘The Origin of Shi’is and their Principles’), 1st ed. 1931,which went through dozens of reprints, and al-Muthul al-’ulya fil-Islam La fi Bhamdun (‘High Values are in Islam, not in Bhamdun’), published in 1953, and reprinted in Teheran in 1983. Kashif al-Ghata acted as a respected and independent broker between the Hashemite monarchy and the disfavoured Shi’is of the Iraqi South. He died in 1954.

15- Nizar az-Zein, "Hadith ash-Shahr" (‘Talk of the Month’), al-’Irfan, 57:6, October 1969, p.888-889.

16- Conversations with Mahdi al-Hakim, London, Summer 1987.

17- Muhammad Ja’far ash-Shaykh Muhsin ‘Arab, "Lamahat min Hayat al-Hakim" (‘Glances from Hakim’s Life’), Jabal ‘Amil, January 1971, p.6. This weekly issue can be found in al-’Irfan, 58:8, Feb. 1971, after p.996.

18- For instance the Lebanese Druze leader Kamal Jumblatt, "Taranim Sufiyya Vedantiyya" (‘Sufist Vedantist Rhymes’), al-’Irfan, 53:5, November 1965, p.447-448; and the Sunni writer Basim al-Jisr, "Wa Saqatat al-Mu’adalat" (‘And the Equations failed’), al-’Irfan, 61:10, December 1973, pp.1289-96 and 1385-86.

19- His masterpiece is an-Naza’at al-Maddiyya fil-falsafat al-’arabiyya wal-islamiyya, (Materialist tendencies in Arab-Islamic Philosophy), 2 vol., al-Farabi, Beirut, 1978-1979. On Mruwwe, see Peter Gran, "Islamic Marxism in Comparative History: the Case of Lebanon, Reflections on the Recent Book of Husayn Muruwah", in Barbara Stowasser ed., The Islamic Impulse, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Washington, 1987.

20- Mahdi ‘Amel has written extensively. See e.g. his Muqaddimat Nazariyya li-Dirasat Athar al-Fikr al-Ishtiraki fi Harakat at-Taharrur al-Watani (‘Theoretical Prolegomena for the Study of the Influence of Socialist Thought on National Liberation Movements’), Part one: Fit-Tanaqud (‘On Contradiction’), Beirut, 1973; Part two: Fi Namat al-Intaj al-Kuluniali (‘On the Colonialist Mode of Production’), Beirut, 1976; Azmat al-Hadara al-’Arabiyya am Azmat al-Burjwaziyyat al-’Arabiyya (‘The Crisis of Arabic Culture or the Crisis of the Arab Bourgeoisies’), Beirut, 1974.

III

1- The episode of the table protocol is related by his son ‘Abd al-Husain in the posthumous compilation of Mughniyya’s Memoirs, entitled Tajarib (‘Trials’), Dar al-Jawad, Beirut, 1400/1980, p.514-516.

2- The inimity with Kazem al-Khalil, then Minister of agriculture, and the Speaker, ‘Adel ‘Usayran, and the tribulations with the authorities are developed in Tajarib, pp.99-107.

3- Muhammad Fadl Sa’d, in "Minas-Sayyed Sharaf ad-Din Ilas-Sayyed Musa" (‘From Sayyed Sharafeddin to Sayyed Musa’), al-’Irfan, 71:7, September 1983, pp.87-95, depicts the process as a smooth and natural phenomenon. In reality, Mughniyya, who was better qualified, and a ‘Amili, understandably resented the appointment, and he never developed a closer relationship with Sadr. See Karl Heinrich Góbel, Moderne Schiitische Politik und Staatsidee, Leske, Opladen, 1984, p.86. Góbel’s book includes a remarkable chapter on Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya, pp.65-140.

4- For the indirect debate between Sadr and As’ad at the eve of the Lebanese civil war, see T. Sicking and S. Khairallah, "The Shi’a Awakening in Lebanon: a Search for Radical Change in a Traditional Way", in CEMAM Reports 1974, Vol.2, Center for the Study of the Modern Arab World, Beirut, pp.97-130. For Musa as-Sadr generally, see Ajami’s biography, The Vanished Imam, and Salim Nasr’s "Mobilisation Communautaire", quoted earlier. Sadr is particularly interesting for his meteoric rise after 1970, and the effectiveness of his mobilization of the Shi’i community, despite the fact that he was a ‘foreigner’. Though not a thinker of the caliber of Mughniyya, his writings, especially in al-’Irfan, deserve a more careful study.

5- Tajarib, p.38. Also at p.39: "Some of the great scholars who graduated from Najaf lived a life of misery and suffering. So much that one of them once said: ‘I was so hungry that I almost ate the rug’".

6- Id., p.61

7- Id., p.79-81.

8- This work, al-Wad’ al Hadir li-Jabal ‘Amil, was unavailable to me, but Mughniyya’s memoirs include lengthy excerpts from the book.

9- Tajarib, p.93-4: To take the patient to a larger city for relief, if he was too weak "to mount a horse, he was put in a coffin for the dead, and carried over shoulder to a road for cars. He would be so scared by the terrorizing episode that his pains were dramatically increased... The bearers of the coffin would every once in a while stop and lay it on the

ground to check whether the sick had perished from fear, heat or the hot wind ! I know personnally people who died from the trauma before they had reached the road."

10- Tajarib, p.96. Kawakibi (1849-1903) wrote in the late 19th century two famous reformist works, Tabae' al-Istibdad ('The Characteristics of Tyranny') and Umm al-Qura ('Mother of the Cities', i.e. Mecca). See further Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1789-1939, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2nd ed. 1983, p.271-273; and the chapter on Kawakibi in Ahmad Amin, Zu'ama' al-Islah ('The Leaders of Reform'), Cairo, 1948.

11- Tajarib, p. 97.

12- Id., p.98.

13- Id., p.429-30.

14- Id., p. 499.

15- Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya, Ash-Shi'a wal-Hakimun ('Shi'is and Rulers'), al-Jawad, Beirut, 5th ed. 1981. On Kashif al-Ghata, see supra, section II. The Iranian Muhammad Husain Tabataba'i (1903-1983) was one of the leading scholars of modern Shi'ism, and the author of the 20 volume exegesis of the Qur'an, al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an. His 'Introduction to Shi'ism', Shi'a Dar Islam ('Shi'is in Islam') was translated in English by Hossein Nasr, Shi'ite Islam, New York, 1975 and in Arabic by Ja'far Baha'eddin, Ash-Shi'a fil-Islam, Teheran, 1983.

16- Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya, al-Islam wal-'Aql ('Islam and Reason'), Beirut, 1984 (1st ed., 1967); Imamat 'Ali bayn al-'Aql wal-Qur'an ('Ali's Leadership between Reason and the Qur'an'), Beirut, 1970.

17- Al-Islam wal-'Aql, p.230; see Góbel p.135. The word 'Alim, plural 'Ulama, designates generically the scholar of the Law in Islamic terminology. The word Mujtahid is synonymous, but applies only to Shi'i scholars. For Usuli Shi'is, i.e. the brand of Shi'ism that has dominated the Twelvers since al-Wahid al-Behbehani in the 18th century, the hierarchy of 'ulama, from the top down, consists formally of Ayat Allah, Hujjat al-Islam, and Thiqat Allah. Beyond this general structure however, there is, particularly for the highest ranks, a flurry of denominations that show, as Mughniyyah indicates, a lack of precision in the nomination process, and in the competence and role of the religious scholars. On this question, see infra, section IV.

18- Ash-Shi'a wal-Hakimun, p.27

19- Mughniyya knew Khumaini, whom he met at least twice in his Southern Iraqi exile. al-Khumaini wad- Dawla al-Islamiyya ('Khumaini and the Islamic State'), p.43.

20- Id. p.59.

21- Id., p.61-62 (Emphasis added). This controversy did not escape the attention of the Iraqi foes of Khumaini. See the criticism of Khumaini's concept of wilayat al-faqih with the help of Mughniyya's arguments by a defender of the Iraqi Ba'th, 'Abd al-Jabbar al-'Umar,

Al-Khumaini baynad-Din wad-Dawla (‘Khumaini between Religion and State’), Afaq ‘Arabiyya, Baghdad, n.d. (1984 ?), especially p.52-56. Interestingly, Mughniyya’s son does not mention al-Khumaini wad-Dawla al-Islamiyya in his father’s works. See the list in Tajarib, p. 593-596.

22- Mughniyya, al-Khumaini, p.75.

23- It should also be noted that Mughniyya showed particular openness throughout his career. As a companion of Husain Mruwwe in Najaf, he always retained his respect and friendship for the former ‘alim, turned Marxist theoretician. And when, in the ‘Azm affair, in 1969-70, Sadiq Jalal al-’Azm criticized religious attitudes in his controversial Naqd al-Fikr ad-Dini (‘Critique of Religious Thought’), Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya attacked the book, but, unlike most other religious men in Lebanon, insisted on the right of ‘Azm to express his views. See Stefan Wild, "Gott und Mensch in Libanon: Die Affðre Sadiq al-’Azm", Der Islam, Vol.48, 1971-1972, pp.206-253, at p.234. An early formulation of this liberalism can be found in Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya, Allah wal-’Aql (‘God and Reason’), 3d ed., n.d. (1st ed. 1959), al-Ahliyya, Beirut, p.48: "Everything accepts questioning and discussion, even religions".

IV -

1- A variation on this theme can be found in Fouad Ajami, The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice since 1967, Cambridge University press, 1981.

2- It is true that the Israeli occupation of parts of South Lebanon (the so-called Security Zone) has endured since the first invasion in 1978. But despite Israeli control, the fact that no settlement was established -nor a plan for such settlement publically revealed- makes the situation of the Lebanese South (for the moment at least, and whatever the talk about the ‘North Bank’) qualitatively different from territories occupied in 1967.

3- See Bob Woodward, Veil: the Secret Wars of the CIA 1981-1987, London, 1987, pp.396-398.

4- On al-Adwa’ and its importance for the Islamic Renaissance, see also my "Le Fáminisme Islamique de Bint al-Houda", Maghreb-Machrek, 116, Summer 1987, p.57 n.42.

5- This information, and an interesting synopsis of Fadlallah’s life can be found in "As-Sayyed Yu’arrif Nafsah" (‘As-Sayyed [Fadlallah] introduces himself’), al-’Alam (London), 13 September 1987, p.34. Several of Fadlallah’s articles in al-Adwa’ are reproduced in Muhammad Husain Fadlallah, Afaq Islamiyya wa Mawadi’ Ukhra (‘Islamic Horizons and other issues’), Beirut, az-Zahra’, 1980.

6- For more details, see my article in Shireen Hunter ed., The Politics of Islamic Revivalism: Diversity and Unity, Indiana University Press, forthcoming.

7- See e.g. Muhammad Mahdi Shamseddin, Thawrat al-Husain fil-Wujdan ash-Sha’bi (‘The Revolution of Husain in Popular Pathos’), Beirut, 1980. This work was published originally in Najaf as a pamphlet in a series directed by Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr;

Muhammad Husain Fadlallah, "Hawla ‘Ashura" (‘About ‘Ashura’), Afaq Islamiyya, pp.67-86.

8- See in a recent interview: "[Question]: Your relation with Syria has entered a period of military confrontation. What do you want from Syria ? [Fadlallah]: You are talking about Hizbullah, and I am not of those who speak in its name for you to address me with this topic". Hawadeth (London), 23/5/1986, p.16.

9- For an appreciation of Nabih Berri’s attitudes, see his interventions at the Genëve and Lausanne 1983-4 Conferences, in Talal Selman ed., al-Mahadir as-Sirriyya al-Kamila (‘The Complete Secret Minutes’), Beirut, 1984, esp. p.128 and 176.

10- See Bassma Kodmani-Darwish, "L’Iran, Nouvel Acteur Fort au Liban", Liban: Espoirs et Ráalitás, Institut Franõais des Relations Internationales, Paris, 1987, pp. 153-164. According to reports from Israeli intelligence sources, Iran is spending $60 to $75 million dollar a year on partisan militias in Lebanon. Thomas Friedman, "Fearing Wider Islamic Extremism, Israel Rethinks Its Tilt Towards Iran", International Herald Tribune, October 26, 1987.

11- Compare for instance Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya, Isra’iliyyat al-Qur’an (‘The Israeli References of the Qur’an’), Beirut, 1981.

12- This point is presented in the good article of Olivier Carrá, "Quelques Mots-Clás de Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah",Revue Franõaise de Science Politique, 37:4, August 1987, pp.479-500, at 479. See in that sense Fadlallah, "al-Wahda al-Islamiyya" (‘Islamic Unity’), al-’Irfan, 71:10, December 1983, p.11; Shamseddin, "al-Janub Jurhan wa Majdan" (‘The South as a Wound and as a Glory’), al-’Irfan, 70:4, April 1982, p.8.

13- "As-Suhyuniyya Ghidda Sarataniyya fi Jism al-’Alam" (‘Zionism is a Cancer in the Body of the World’), Tawhid (Teheran), 5:25, November-January 1986, pp.140-147.

14- Hizbullah’s program was presented in a 48-page pamphlet in a press conference held in Beirut on February 16, 1985. The main points of the program can be found in the daily as-Safir , February 17, 1985. French translation in Cahiers de l’Orient, 1:2, Second term 1986, pp. 254-258.

15- The Three No’s of the Khartum Conference of Arab leaders, held after the 1967 war (‘No truce, No negotiation, No recognition’) should be contrasted with the readiness for negotiation of the 1982 Fez Summit.

16- Muhammad Mahdi Shamseddin, "ad-Dalalat an-Nafsiyya li-Harb Ramadan wa Akhtar as-salam ma’al-Yahud" (‘The Psychological Consequences of the Ramadan [October 73] War and the Dangers of Peace with the Jews’), al-Muntalaq, April 1986, pp.23-35.

17- Id., p.24

18- Id.

19- Id., p.28.

20- Id. p.30.

21- Id., p.27

22- Muhammad Mahdi Shamseddin, "‘Alem min Kibar ‘Ulama’ al-Islam" (‘A Great Scholar of Islam’), in Mughniyya, Tajarib, p.583.

23- Shamseddin, "I’lan al-Muqawama al-Madaniyya ash-Shamila Didda Isra’il", (‘Declaration of Total Civil Resistance to Israel, al-’Irfan, 71:10, January 1983, pp.3-12.

24- This is a consistent barter offered to the Israelis by Amal: total withdrawal versus unwritten guarantees against military action through the Northern borders.

25- The rejectionism of Fadlallah is based on the argument of the expansionist nature of the Israeli entity. In a major speech in 1986, the argument is presented as "a struggle for life, ...which must be viewed over 50 years... and not a struggle for a [short] period. Israel does not believe in peace. Even if we want peace, it will always create all the conditions for war to complete its strategy... No peace with Israel. Either it exists, or we exist". As-Safir, 13/5/1986.

26- On this resistance, see Ansar Jabhat al-Muqawama al-Wataniyya al-Lubnaniyya (The supporters of the front of Lebanese national resistance), Sanatan minal-Ihtilal...Sanatan minal-Muqawama (‘Two years of occupation...Two years of resistance’), Beirut, 1984; Samir Kassir, "La Rásistance ê l’Occupation Israálienne s’Amplifie", Le Monde Diplomatique, May 1983.

27- Muhammad Zu’ayter, Nazra ‘ala Tarh al-Jumhuriyya al-Islamiyya fi Lubnan (‘A Look at the Proposal for an Islamic Republic in Lebanon’), Beirut, 1408/1987, p.175

28- See for the discussions of this platform, my article on Iraq in S. Hunter ed., The Politics of Islamic Revivalism.

29- Cf further Fuad Khuri, "The Ulama: a Comparative Study of Sunni and Shi’a Religious Officals", Middle Eastern Studies, 23:3, July 1987, pp. 291-312.

30- Muhammad Husain Fadlallah, "Man Alladhi Yaqud ‘Amaliyyat at-Taghyir, Hizb al-Umma aw Ummat al-Hizb ?" (‘Who directs the operation of change, the Party of the Nation or the Nation of the Party ?’) al-Muntalaq, May 1986, p.10.

31- Id., p.12-13.

32- Muhammad al-Mahdi Shamseddin, Nazam al-Hukm wal-Idara fil-Islam, (‘The system of governance and administration in Islam’), Beirut, 1955, p.231. (Emphasis added).

33- See on the necessity of harmony in Shi’i-Sunni relations, Muhammad Mahdi Shamseddin, "al-Wahda al-Islamiyya" (‘The Islamic Unity’), al-’Irfan, 71:8-9, Oct-Nov. 1983, pp.3-9.

34- Shamseddin, al-’Ilmaniyya, Beirut, 1980.

35- Shamseddin, Nazam ad-Dimuqratiyya al-'adadiyya al-qa'ima 'ala Mabda' ash-Shura (The system of demoratic pluralism based on the principle of consultation), Beirut, 1985, published by the private office of Muhammad Mahdi Shmaseddin. I am grateful for this reference to Hasan Farran.

36- After a visit of Teheran on the occasion of a Congress on Muslim Thought, divergences have been reported between Fadlallah and his hosts over the appropriateness of an Islamic state in its Iranian form for Lebanon.

37- Shamseddin, "I'lan al-Muqawama...", p.109: "We understand the fears and we will give them their due"; Nazam ad-Dimuqratiyya, p.46-48.

38- This temporization and the call for a spiritual understanding with the Christians against communism and secularism are a leitmotiv of Fadlallah's discourse. See for a recent formulation, his interview with ash-Shira', September 28, 1987, p.16-17; "al-Haraka al-Islamiyya bayna at-Tatarruf wal-I'tidal" ('The Islamic Movement between Extremism and Moderation'), al-Muntalaq, September 1987. The dialectic of violence and non-violence is addressed at length in his al-Islam wa Mantiq al-Quwwa ('Islam and the Logic of Force'), Beirut, 1979.
